

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

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AMCONSUL KARACHI

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TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: KHAR-RAMAY STEW APPROACHES BOILING POINT

REF: LAHORE 0569

SUMMARY: FORMAL STATEMENT BY PUNJAB GOVERNOR KHAR, CARRIED BY LOCAL VERNACULAR PAPERS MAY 22, CONTAINS COUNTER-BLAST AGAINST CHIEF MINISTER RAMAY'S RECENT CRITICISM OF KHAR FOR IMPROPER AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL POLITICAL ACTIVITY, AND BRINGS THEIR PERSONAL POLITICAL FEUD EVER CLOSER TO BOILING POINT. END SUMMARY.

1. REFTTEL MAY 19 REPORTED HEATING UP OF LONG-SIMMERING POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN PUNJAB GOVERNOR KHAR AND CHIEF MINISTER RAMAY, WITH LATEST EXAMPLES OF ERUPTION INTO PUBLIC VIEW. EMPHASIS WAS ON RAMAY'S CONFIDENT COUNTER-ATTACK AGAINST KHAR'S ATTEMPTED INTRUSIONS INTO ADMINISTRATION AS WELL AS PPP POLITICS IN PUNJAB.

2. LAHORE VERNACULAR PRESS TODAY PROMINENTLY DISPLAYS STRIDENT COUNTER-BLAST BY KHAR AGUJNST RAMAY, BRINGING THIS PERSONAL POLITICAL FEUD EVER CLOSER TO BOILING POINT.

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BLAST, IN FORM OF FORMAL STATEMENT BY GOVERNOR RELEASED

THROUGH HIS PRESS SECRETARY AMANULLAH KHAN MAY 21, OPENS WITH INTEMPERATE INDICTMENT OF "MR. HANEEF RAMAY" FOR RECENTLY ACCUSING KHAR OF INDULGING IN "SIGNATURE-COLLECTING CAMPAIGN" TO PROMOTE HIS POLITICAL FORTUNES IN PUNJAB. GOVERNOR'S REJOINDER ASSERTS THAT RAMAYFS STATEMENT "BESIDES CONTAINING BIG-HEADED THREATS INCLUDES SOME EXTREMELY OBJECTIONABLE REMARKS AND FACTS PRESENTED IN DISTORTED FORM." RAMAY'S REMARKS CONCERNING SIGNATURE-COLLECTING AND CREATION OF FACTIONALISM IN THE PPP "BETRAY HIS CHAOTIC MIND."

3. KHAR'S STATEMENT PROCEEDS TO EXPLAIN THAT, AS MATTER OF PRACTICE, HE REGULARLY MEETS MPAS AND MNS FROM ALL OVER PUNJAB ON TUESDAY EVENINGS TO "HEAR THEIR GENUINE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION" WHICH THEY DESIRED HIM TO "CONVEY TO PRIME MINISTER." THIS WAS JUSTIFIED BECAUSE "IN MY CAPACITY AS PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR I AM THE AGENT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND IT IS MY CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY TO KEEP THE HEAD OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INFORMED ABOUT THE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SITUATION IN THE PROVINCE." MOREOVER, RAMAY SHOULD REMEMBER THAT HE (KHAR) WAS NOT ONLY GOVERNOR BUT A MEMBER OF PPP CENTRAL COMMITTEE, FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF PUNJAB PPP AND FOUNDER-MEMBER OF THE PARTY "WHO HAS WORKED DIRECTLY UNDER DYNAMIC AND SAGACIOUS LEADERSHIP OF CHAIRMAN BHUTTO FROM VERY INCEPTION."

4. RAMAY'S THREAT NOT TO ALLOW SUCH POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY GOVERNOR, KHAR CONTINUES, IS BASED ON "RIDICULOUS ASSUMPTIONS SINCE THE OFFICE OF CHIEF MINISTER IS PURELY ADMINISTRATIVE." PPP AFFAIRS WERE NOT AT ALL UNDER ADMINISTRATION OF CHIEF MINISTER. ONLY PRIME NAEMEDMW, AS PARTY CHAIRMAN, IS ENTITLED TO ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS AS PARTY LEADER.

5. AS FOR HIS OWN CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE, KHAR DECLARES THAT CONSTITUTION PLACES NO RESTRICTION OVER HIS POLITICAL CONDUCT, AND HE FEELS "DUTY-BOUND TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH PARTY WORKERS AND MEMBERS OF LEGISLATURES AND CONVEY THEIR COMPLAINTS TO PARTY CHAIRMAN." ON ASSUMING OFFICE OF GOVERNOR HE HAD NOT "DEPRIVED SELF OF POLITICAL CAREER" NOR CONSIGNED HIMSELF TO "LIFE OF POLITICAL OBLIVION AND INACTION."

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6. KHAR ALSO TOOK PASSING CHEAP SHOT AT AN UNNAMED MPA (I.E., MIR BALAKH SHER MAZARI, PPP MPA FROM DERA GRAZI KHAN), WHO HAD ALSO CRITICIZED HIM FOR RECENT POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT. KHAR DECLARED THAT THIS MPA -- A MEMBER OF "ANTI-PEOPLE AND REACTIONARY JAGIRDAR CLASS" WHO HAD JOINED PPP ONLY AFTER IT ATTAINED POWER -- HAD "NO MORAL OR POLITICAL PRINCIPLE, AND NO RIGHT TO SERMONIZE ME."

7. UN SHARP CONCLUSION, KHAR WARNED "I WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE THE PARTY, PROVINCE AND COUNTRY, INDIFFERENT TOWARD TALK OF ANY PERSON, AND WILL CONTINUE TO SUBMIT TO HEAD OF GOVERNMENT AND CHAIRMAN OF PARTY WHATEVER PROPOSALS I DEEM NECESSARY. THESE PEOPLE CANNOT COME IN MY WAY."

8. FULL TEXT OF STATEMENT IS CARRIED IN ONLY TWO LOCAL PAPERS; FRONTPAGED BY INDEPENDENT NAWA-I-WAQT, PRECEDED BY PAPER'S POINTED SUMMARY; AND BACKPAGES BY SIASAT (OPPORTUNIST, PRO-PPP) WITHOUT ELABORATION. IMROZE (NPT) CARRIES SUMMARY ON BACK PAGE QUOTING APP. OFFICIAL PPP ORGAN MUSAWAT SIGNIFICANTLY REMAINS SILENT ON THIS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF KHAR-RAMAY HASSLE.

9. COMMENT: KHAR'S STATEMENT (FULL TEXT BEING POUCHED) SPEAKS FOR ITSELF AS SHARPEST AND BITTEREST PUBLIC ATTACK THUS FAR BY EITHER SIDE IN HEIGHTENING INTER-PARTY POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN PUNJAB. NEW ANGLE IS KHAR'S CLEVER ENDEAVOR TO DISTINGUISH HIS POLITICAL OBLIGATIONS AS A PPP LEADER -- WHICH HE CLAIMS TO BE EXERCISING IN THIS CONTEXT -- FROM HIS LIMITED CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE AS GOVERNOR. WHETHER HE GETS AWAY WITH IT IS NOW SQUARELY UP TO CHAIRMAN BHUTTO. (IMPLICITLY LATTER MAY ALREADY HAVE APPROVED OF THIS APPROACH IN RECENT MEETINGS.) BUT RAMAY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD LETTING THIS PERSONAL ATTACK GO UNANSWERED. THE POT THUS APPEARS ABOUT READY TO BOIL OVER, THOUGH WE CANNOT YET TELL WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO BE BURNED -- KHAR, RAMAY OR BOTH.
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